

*Subject*  
JUL 26 1954

Mr. Duncan G. Harris, Chairman  
Committee on National Security  
New York Chamber of Commerce  
65 Liberty Street  
New York 5, New York

Dear Mr. Harris:

Thank you very much for your letter of 9 July 1954, requesting my views on the relationship between CIA and the Congress, a subject which is currently being studied by your Committee.

I have studied the various bills which have been introduced into the Congress to establish a Joint Committee on Central Intelligence. They have been put in, I believe, by good friends of the Agency who are interested in finding a way to reconcile the exercise of Congressional authority with the special need for security in an operation like that of CIA.

However, I do not know whether it would add anything very much to the present system of Congressional control exercised through the Armed Services and Appropriations Committees. I naturally wish to respect the prerogatives of Congress and recognize that their confidence is essential if the Agency is to receive appropriations necessary to carry on its work efficiently.

Certainly I shall cooperate with the Congress in every way compatible with the need for security. When the 80th Congress set up the CIA they recognized this problem and wrote into the law that as Director I should be responsible for protecting intelligence sources and methods from unauthorized disclosure. Any disclosure which leads to publicity and gets information into the hands of potential enemies would to my mind be "unauthorized".

Under the Standing Rules of the Senate and House, matters referring to the "common defense generally" come within the jurisdiction of the Armed Services Committee in each body. Therefore, since its creation, the Central Intelligence Agency has

reported to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and House, on the basis that the functions of CIA relate to the "common defense generally". The National Security Act of 1947, which established the Agency, came before the Senate Armed Services Committee, and all subsequent legislation, other than appropriations, dealing solely with CIA, has been handled by the Armed Services Committees of the House and Senate.

The proposed Joint Committee on Central Intelligence has been likened to the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy. In this connection it should be noted that the Central Intelligence Agency does not have the same legislative problems as the Atomic Energy Commission. While CIA has averaged less than one law a year, there were more than 20 bills on atomic energy introduced into the 82nd Congress, and, up to the present time, more than 15 in the 83rd Congress. The atomic energy bills before the Joint Committee have covered such subjects as construction, housing facilities at Oak Ridge, self-government at Hanford, and development of atomic energy. On the other hand, the work of intelligence is almost exclusively outside the United States and does not require complicated or extensive legislation.

I again wish to express my appreciation for the opportunity of expressing my views on this matter. I am of the opinion that generally speaking we have the closest and most cordial relations with the Members of the Congress, particularly with the Armed Services Committees who are in effect the parent Committees of this Agency. If the Armed Services Committees continue to exercise the same quiet and thorough supervision over our legislative problems as they have in the past, it is felt it will go a long way to assure the ability of this Agency to continue its work with the complete confidence of the majority of the Members of the Congress in both Houses.

Sincerely,

OGC:WLP/blc (21 July 1954)  
Orig. - Addressee  
3 - Signer  
2 - Legislative Counsel

SIGNED  
Allen W. Dulles  
Director